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TAGS: PREL KMDR KPAL KWBG KPAO IS
SUBJECT: CORRECTED COPY - JERUSALEM MEDIA REACTION (7/21):
JERUSALEMITES ARE DISAPPOINTED AND HAVE LOST HOPE

Main Stories:

The visit by British Premier Gordon Brown to Bethlehem on July 20 leads all front pages. Al- Quds reports that after his meeting with Palestinian Authority President Mahmud Abbas, Brown stated at a joint press conference that increased settlement activities complicate the peace process and that Israel should instead be making concessions. Papers also note Brown's announcement of $60 million in assistance to the Palestinian Authority, with Al- Ayyam and Al- Hayat Al- Jadida highlighting his comment that, "Jerusalem is the capital of the two states." Abbas emphasized that Israel has not honored its commitments made at Annapolis, coverage continues. In photos, Al Hayat Al Jadida runs a front page photo of Brown's wife on a July 20 visit to the Bethlehem Ayda refugee camp, with the separation barrier clearly visible in the background. Related reporting in all dailies highlights Israeli Premier Olmert's July 20 comment that an agreement with the Palestinians is, "closer than ever." Other Brown coverage in Al- Quds reports that students in the Gaza Strip sent a letter asking Brown to press Israel on exit permits for students wishing to study abroad.
All dailies report that Israeli security sources told Israeli press that Hamas is seeking to imitate Hizbollah in its negotiations with Israel over a possible prisoners' release deal. According to the coverage, Hamas leader Ismail Haniyyah is determined to enforce Hamas conditions in any exchange that would include the release of Israeli soldier Shalit. For his part, Israeli Premier Ehud Olmert considers negotiations regarding Shalit, "not easy." Al- Quds reports that Hamas has presented a list of 1,000 Palestinian prisoners to be released but, Israel so far, has refused the list.

Daily, front page reporting on Israeli military action in the West Bank and Jerusalem continues. All papers report on the July 20 release of a video-tape showing a handcuffed and blindfolded

Palestinian being shot point blank in the legs with rubber bullets by an Israeli soldier in the West Bank village of Ni'lin. Al Ayaam leads with photos from the video that was released by Israeli watchdog group Betselem. Coverage does not state the reason for the Palestinian's arrest. Ni'lin is the site of frequent protests against the separation barrier. In Jerusalem, all papers cite Israeli daily Haaretz in their reporting about Israeli attempts to "take over" the house of the Al Kurd family in East Jerusalem. The family faces eviction after losing its case before the Israeli Supreme Court. According to coverage, the action is part of a larger plan for settlement expansion.

Israeli intelligence sources reported on July 20 that Washington will attack Iran some time in the next two months if talks in Geneva fail, according to front pages. Related coverage in Al-Quds notes a July 20 statement by Iranian Vice President of Culture and Tourism Masha'i that Iran is, "a friend to the Israeli people."

On the topic of internal Palestinian reconciliation talks, Al- Ayyam highlights news that Palestinian factions in the Gaza Strip have completed "a worksheet" that outlines topics to be discussed and mechanisms for launching a national dialogue.

Weekend stories

Sunday, July 20, 2008
All dailies lead with news about the participation of Palestinian Premier Salam Fayyad in the 100th anniversary celebration of

Ramallah municipality held on July 19. In his remarks, Fayyad called on all Palestinian factions to accept the formation of a "transitional government" that will organize new parliamentary and presidential elections. In Al- Ayyam, Fayyad adds that there should be an immediate response to Palestinian Authority President Abbas' initiative to launch a national dialogue and that the top priority for Palestinians is to protect land in order to defeat Israeli settlement activities. In related coverage, all dailies note Hamas leader Ismail Haniyyah's July 19 announcement that Hamas is ready to begin a national dialogue to discuss all pending matters.

All dailies report on a series of meetings held by Palestinian Authority President Mahmud Abbas on July 19 in Ramallah and Bethlehem. Al- Quds leads with the meeting of Abbas and European Delegate for the Peace Process Mark Otte in Ramallah. Al- Hayat Al-Jadida quotes Otte stating that, "Israeli incursions into Palestinian cities make the job of the Palestinian police in their campaign to impose security and law, difficult." Al- Ayyam reports that Otte paid a "solidarity visit" to the Al- Kurd family who face eviction from their East Jerusalem home. The dailies report that Abbas also met with the Al-Kurd family in Bethlehem and reassured them that the Palestinian Authority will exert all efforts, "to defend their house from being occupied by the Israeli authorities." Finally, the three dailies report that Abbas also met with American Middle East expert Dennis Ross in Ramallah and briefed him about, "Israeli violations in Palestinian cities."

Al- Hayat Al- Jadida highlights that the U.S. State Department sent Iran a letter through a mediator on July 19, warning that Iran must choose between cooperation and confrontation regarding nuclear issues.

Saturday, July 19, 2008

Al Quds leads with news that Secretary Rice emphasized on July 18 that the U.S. has "changed its attitude" on the Iranian nuclear issue and will send a delegate to negotiations that will be held with Iran on July 19 in Egypt. In response, "Iran is studying its strategic options and worrying about progress" in Israeli/Syrian negotiations, all front pages report.

All dailies highlight the results of the Tawjihi (SAT-like) exams in front page headlines. The papers report that the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Education revealed that the release of results

was coordinated with the Hamas-led Ministry of Education in the Gaza Strip, in contrast to last year when Hamas angered the PA by releasing Gaza results ahead of the West Bank. The story leads photo coverage in Al Ayyam and Al Hayat Al Jadida. Al Ayyam shows a picture of Palestinian youth celebrating their successful Tawjihi results, while Al Quds shows the top scoring science graduate, a smiling girl from Janin, enjoying the proud embrace of her father. Al Hayat Al Jadida runs the same photo of a top graduate in Gaza, fully veiled, telling gathered journalists that, "I scored the highest marks despite the occupation destroying my home during the exams.

Front pages highlight remarks by Quartet Envoy Tony Blair that the two-state solution is the only avenue for solving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Blair made the remarks during a July 19 visit to Norway.

BLOCK QUOTES:

Al- Quds prints its daily editorial entitled, "Jerusalem and the Jerusalemites- where to?" (7/21): "...the lack of a collective and comprehensive Palestinian policy and the lack of united Arab and Islamic speech about the future of Jerusalem has led to [the city's] continued occupation and allowed the Israel Government to make unilateral decisions that impose new facts on the ground without concern for international resolutions or international legitimacy. Such a situation will make it hard to divide the city again, and what makes matters worse is the negligence of larger countries and their silence towards Israeli actions in the city... Jerusalemites are disappointed and have lost hope... [however,] Jerusalemites must refocus their priorities... and unite... the continued occupation does not mean that [Jerusalemites] should not demand their lost rights. And finally, it is not possible for the situation [in Jerusalem] to continue since its long history teaches us that Jerusalem has changed hands many times."

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